

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 5-14 are pending in the present application. Claims 3 and 4 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 5 and 7 have been amended. Claims 8-14 are new. Basis for the amendments and new claims can be found throughout the specification, claims and drawings originally filed.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 4 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takano, et al. (JP 2001-130245) in view of Izawa, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,516,628). Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takano, et al. (JP 2001-130245) in view of Izawa, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,516,628) as applied to Claim 1 and further in view of Inoue (U.S. Pat. No. 5,044,169). Claims 5 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takano, et al. (JP 2001-130245) in view of Izawa, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,516,628) as applied to Claim 4 above and further in view of Schnelle, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,611,374). Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of Claims 3 and 4 as well as additional limitations. The additional limitations that have been added to Claim 1 include a rear decompression unit disposed between the condenser and the rear evaporator and the limitation that the rear decompression unit regulates a superheating degree of gas refrigerant at an outlet of the rear evaporator independently from an operation of the front evaporator in the cooling mode. Thus, the front decompression unit is a fixed throttle while the rear decompression unit is not limited to a fixed throttle.

Izawa, et al. (Claims 1 and 4 rejection) and Inoue (Claim 3 rejection) do not disclose an air conditioner having front and rear air conditioning units and thus they cannot suggest the limitations of amended Claim 1. As stated by the Examiner, Takano, et al. in view of Izawa, et al. does not disclose a fixed throttle. Inoue teaches a fixed throttle can be used between a condenser and an evaporator but Inoue does not suggest a fixed throttle for the front unit and an independently operated decompression device for the rear unit. In addition, Takano does not disclose independent operation of the front and rear air conditioning units.

Thus, Applicants believe Claim 1, as amended, patentably distinguishes over the art of record. Likewise, Claims 5-7, which ultimately depend from Claim 1, are also believed to patentably distinguish over the art of record. Claims 3 and 4 have been cancelled. Reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

NEW CLAIMS

New Claims 8-10 are dependent claims that ultimately depend from Claim 1 and are thus believed to be allowable.

New Claims 11 and 14 are independent claims that define a fixed throttle for the front decompression unit and a thermal expansion valve for the rear decompression unit. New Claims 12 and 13 ultimately depend from new Claim 11.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request

that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: April 11, 2005

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